

SHANTYTOWN.

THE great city spreads itself day by day. Chafing within its island limits, it feeds the muddy bays and shallows of its river-front with its own soil, with the ashes of its myriad fires, with the ruins of old houses torn down to make room for new; steals from the water long lines of streets; still unsatisfied, crawling ceaselessly northward, it divides and subdivides its habitations; gardens disappear and tenement-houses rise; every man's allowance of space is cut down to its lowest possibility; the rich man can buy himself a little kingdom a hundred feet square; the poor man must hire a bed six feet by two, in a five-cent lodging-house. And still there is not room. One day, a full block of brown-stone houses, climbing up on the rocks by Central Park, cuts right into a gypsy camp of superfluous poor, squatting outside the gates—a peaceable and well-organized colony, that could not find room for itself in the regions of brick and mortar.

And then the squatter colony must go. Pariahs of poverty, these extra-mural citizens must pull to pieces their home of shreds and patches, and set up their household gods elsewhere—little matter where. No one will remember, next year, when the place of their habitation is graded, curbed and paved, according to city regulations; when the six-story mansions of Philistia stand where stood the whitewashed cabins; when C-spring carriages roll where the one-horse wagon of the licensed vender began its rounds, and when the aristocratic anglo-manic's dog-cart has replaced the rag-picker's.

The knell of the little colony has already struck. The elevated railroad has set its iron feet in the westernmost highway of Shantytown. A few pioneer brown-stone fronts, with their great Doric high-stoops adjusted to levels strange to the cartography of the earlier settlers, stare, tenantless, out of blank, astonished windows, at the ragged and ruleless architecture of their humble neighbors; the dull, incessant thud of the steam-pick thrills the rocky foundations of the town; long processions of creaking carts stream up from the city, deposit each a cubic yard of earth in some broad ravine where a market-garden and a small stock-yard flourish, thirty feet below the curb, and on the morrow the market-garden and the stock-yard are things of the past. The market-gardener has turned teamster, and is

“leveling” elsewhere; the stock-farmer is getting his bread by carrying a hod on the newest flat-building going up on Madison avenue, and the boys of Shantytown are playing base-ball on the smooth ground where a placard announces “Building Lots for Sale.”

Yet, before it is utterly gone, let us take a walk through Shantytown. It is not too much to give it—this fast-passing phase or fraction of our city's growth—an hour or two of our time; for the wind blows fresh from the west, across the steely-blue river that gleams down at the bottom of the empty road-ways. The sky is clear overhead, except where the smoky haze about the Jersey river highlands softens the sharper blue. And where we are going we shall see, on the east, the many-colored foliage of Central Park, and, to the north, the white and brown of Bloomingdale villas, showing through the distant green.

But, first, where and what is Shantytown? It has lain, all these years, at your doors, O careless New-Yorker, and you know as little of it as you know of the Battery Park, where your father walked of summer evenings a half-century gone by, a fine young man in rolling-collar swallow-tail and tasseled Hessians, and wooed your mother, in a *Directoire* dress whose belt came close up to the heart that throbbed responsive to the formal utterances of his well-regulated passion. *That* was at the other end of the city; we are going now to the region bounded, as the election notices say, on the S. by 65th street; on the N. by 85th; on the W. by 8th avenue, and on the E. by Central Park.

This is the Bohemia of the laboring classes. In this country we all belong, or at least we ought to belong, to the laboring classes; but the most of us get from our labor wherewith to keep a certain extent of roof over a limited number of heads. There are some, however, who toil for ten hours only to buy themselves the right to a dozen cubic feet of sleeping-room during such part of the fourteen remaining hours as they may choose not to spend in the streets or the beer-saloons. Of this class, which has no condition nor possession to characterize it beyond the fact of its laboring, there must always be found some lively-minded and restless members who are ill content to gasp out their lives in the packed cellars and garrets down the back alleys of the lower town; they yearn for freedom of movement, for light and air, for

the smell of the bare earth and the sight of trees and water. It was some such adventurous souls as these, brave discoverers of the rabble, rambling rakes of poverty, who long ago found their way up to this rocky region, built homes of boards and canvas, and bought goats—which have since multiplied in a ratio wholly disproportionate to the growth of the settlement, respectable as that increase has been: for others, less clearly aware of what moved them, soon came to join the hardy and happy pioneers.

But to be original, independent and comfortable is to be Bohemian; and to be Bohemian is to be condemned of conventionality. When young Mr. and Mrs. Doveleigh van Stuyvesant enter upon the married state, with much affectionate enthusiasm, two unnecessarily long pedigrees, and \$1,500 yearly income, they are expected, by good society, to find a corner in *his* father's house, or *her* father's house, and there to live, dependent and cramped, but unimpeachably proper and "nice"! And if they take it into their young heads to rent a little room for themselves, near Union Square, turn it into a small and cheap palace of decorative art, and go foraging among the French table-d'hôte restaurants, dining with the newspaper men and the artists—why, Niceness at once labels them "queer—not to be trusted," and they are outlawed—but happy.

The law of the World of Laziness has its counterpart in the World of Labor. Right-minded and right-thinking poverty clings to its small, stuffy, half-lit tenement-house rooms with a steadfast devotion. Two modes of living it holds utterly in horror. One of these is the life planned for it by philanthropists, in "model" cottages: the other is the disreputable freedom of the shanty.

For the dislike which the poor undoubtedly bear toward the pattern habitations of too-officious benevolence there may be much reason; but, surely, the lofty contempt of a seventh floor in Baxter street for the healthful hovels of the Boulevard is a meanness of small conventionality in which unconscious envy must go for something.

When Pat O'Donohue sits in his smoke-begrimed den, high up near the shaky roof-tree of Murphy's tenement, listening to the rattle and roar of the Elevated Railroad trains, far below him, as they echo up the narrow alley, looking down at the black, crowded streets, where the children swarm in the darkness, and the red, camphene-fed lamps of the venders' torches flare and flicker, his breath choked with the varied

foulnesses of sewer-gas and stifling crowds, the night-wind coming in his window, heavy with the smells of Hunter's Point, to mix with the essence of his own pork and cabbage,—is Pat, in all his pride of poor respectability, much better off than Tim, "who's gahn to live up wid the folks in thim shanties, the b'y has—sorra's the day such luck iver kem to the fam'ly!"—is he, indeed?

Here we are at Shantytown. Shanties dot the landscape near and far; shanties mark the lines of graded streets north and west; but it takes only a glance to show us that here, right in front of us, lies a veritable town of shanties—an ordered aggregation of hovels that speaks of an association of interests and an identity of tastes—the two great principles that enter into the foundation of villages and cities. You know at once that something stronger than mere chance has drawn these dwellers in huts together; something more mighty than mere accident has made them live in peace and unity for years. You see at once that, within the legal limits of the city, before the very doors of the actual town, this little settlement exists in its entity, in its quiddity, as Charles Lamb might have said, a something quite by itself and for itself.

Standing here at Sixtieth street, your eye, turned toward the rising ground where a glimmer of white shows the old Croton aqueduct and the gentle slopes of hills cut right and left by boulevard and avenue, takes in a space just half a mile in length—from Sixty-second to Seventy-second streets—and perhaps an eighth of a mile wide, covered with a huddling host of small houses, mostly one story high, no two on a level.* This space is bounded right and left by two avenues, straight as an arrow-flight, and with but slight undulations. It is further transected by streets that run at perfect right angles to the Eighth and Ninth avenues. These sharp lines serve only to mark the strange irregularity of the region. From where we stand, we catch sight of chimneys just peeping above the curb-stones of Seventieth street. A half-dozen blocks nearer, the town mounts an ambitious elevation and sits, a beggarly Rome, hill-enthroned, dominating the surrounding hollows.

For Shantytown lies, for the best part, in certain quadrangular depressions, made by

* Since this article was written, Shantytown has lost several blocks at each end—absolutely *lost* them, for they have been filled in or cut down to the plane of the graded streets.



CORNER SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET AND ELEVENTH AVENUE.

the laying-out and grading of the highways that checker its picturesque irregularity. These broad roads have run, like railroad embankments, across a low country, whose undrained bottom now stares up to heaven from amid four sloping walls of earth and rubble.

But the shanties make no account of high ground nor low. They nestle in the malarious hollows, or perch impudently on the salubrious heights. Their whitewashed walls shine out against the raw, red earth of huge slopes like fortress-walls; their fantastic gables, adorned with bird-houses of quaint design, stand out in sharp outline against the sky, whose keen blue gleams brightest above the high gray rocks.

The suburbs of the town are here at Sixtieth street; but they do not cluster closely together below Sixty-fifth street and that large, ambitious house of yellow-stone-faced brick, whose unused *porte-cochère* has so many years mocked the unfashionable roadway. Pass this, and we are within the limits. Stop here for a moment, if you wish to see the last of one of the most characteristic sections of the colony. Here are two blocks that are still geographically one. The street

has not been cut through, from avenue to avenue. It has a beginning now, right ahead of us, as we stand on Eighth avenue. A broad ridge of mud starts from our feet and divides the hollow below us, pausing feebly at the rocky heights that shut the river out—a projecting joint of the island's backbone. Beyond this hummock we see the top of a derrick, occasionally veiled in a cloud of white steam. In a month or two, a wide ravine will cleave the rocks and meet this abortive mud-embankment. But now the hollows on this side, and the heights on the Boulevard end of the two blocks, swarm with shanties. Some stand in the very path of the steam-drill, nor will they disappear until the rock is actually drilled from under them. When we pass down the Boulevard, going home, you will see a hut with one corner projecting beyond the edge of the rocks. The proprietor sits in the door-way. He will move out in a day or two. He has to get up and retire a hundred yards or so every time there is a blast; but that is no reason for quitting his home with premature and injudicious haste.

The folk who have builded in the mud are, in this case, better off than they who

have set their houses upon a rock. These former nestle in the excavation made when Eighth avenue was graded. Their highest roofs do not come up to the line of the pavement. Some of them lie so low that it looks as if a heavy rain would drown them. Others crowd up close to the street, utilizing the fortress-like slope as a combined wall and floor. Others mount the proud eminence of an ash-heap perhaps twenty feet high, a relic of abandoned

night ago. It is not wholly closed up yet. At the further end there is a junkman's hut, with his little barn, his stable, sty and shed, and a perfect wilderness of "truck"—boxes, barrels, baskets, stove-pipes, bottles, cart-wheels, odds and ends of furniture—the accumulations of, it may be, a dozen years of his strange traffic. See, his high-pitched roof is ornamented with a coiled and twisted skeleton—a crinoline, that mayhap puffed out the gorgeous silks of some fair American



A CHARACTER.

dumping-grounds. Almost every yard of space is occupied. Here and there is an open stretch; but the lines of foundation-posts show that buildings have lately been removed.

But why do we linger to look at these shanties, which are not so picturesque as the party-colored groups to the north? Why? Do you see that smooth breadth of new earth on the block to the south? That was just such a populous hollow as this a fort-

who courtesied within these pliant wires at the court of the last and least Napoleon. Again, mayhap, it did nothing of the sort. Who shall predicate thus much from a bird's-eye view of a feminine hoop on the roof of a rag-picker's house? And see, the tenant's big Newfoundland regards us with a curious eye. We should do well to press onward up the long, bare avenue.

A block further north, we find another "lift" of the rocks which still defies the surveyors.



IN THE GERMAN QUARTER.

We clamber up a ragged and winding space, impassable for horses, yet evidently meant for a road, an apology for the street that is not. Up here the wind blows fresh and free. We can see the river, bright today, and flecked with white sails of yachts. The houses here are neater and more homelike than those we have just seen. These are the choice places, pre-empted by their first settlers, who have been at pains to make their nests as snug and pleasant to the eye as may be. We get back to the walk by Central Park, and note that on the north end of this hill the shanties fairly pack themselves together. Above here the streets are all cut through and graded, some partly paved, and the crowded cottages edge the "stoop-line" with decorous regularity. But the physical geography of the space between the streets is unchanged; and the shanty architect revels in unevenness. He finds no two feet of surface on a level, and he adapts his structure to the conditions of his site.

The impression that this small and strange city makes upon the chance beholder is that of a wild dream of all that he has ever imagined in the way of odd sea-side shelters, boat-cabins, wharf-sheds and marine cubby-

houses generally, jumbled together in confusion by a storm, and stranded here. At first the eye cannot make out separate forms in these acres of wood and tin and canvas, clothing the inequalities of the ground. It is only a mass of close-set, distinct patches of brown and gray, in every shade, heightened by spots of white, green, or red, and backed, on the further ridge, by the sharp sky-blue. Then this multi-colored expanse begins to resolve itself into walls and roofs, windows and doors, chimneys, porches, gables and galleries. But here the process ends. We cannot assign part to part, nor fit these shreds and patches into habitable structures. Each one must be studied by itself. In the mass, individual combinations are lost in the prevailing lawlessness of line and hue.

The shanty is the most wonderful instance of perfect adaptation of means to an end in the whole range of modern architecture. Nothing is prepared for it, neither ground nor material. Its builders have but an empirical knowledge of the craft they practice. They scorn a model, and they work with whatever comes to hand.

This house in front of us found a triangular bit of rock for itself, about as large as a



SHANTYTOWN GEESE.

Fifth-avenue parlor. The rock slopes up from the small end, where it connects with this little alley between the red shanty, to the right, and the brown shanty, to the left. At the large end of the triangle it drops down abruptly. Now look at the grip and smartness and easy-going adaptability to circumstances of that shanty. It climbs over

the rock, and puts its front door at the very summit; thence its other rooms slip off, at lower levels. An extensive stair-way system being out of the question, these lower rooms are reached by trap-doors in their roofs, which are exactly on a level with the kitchen door. A small gallery leads to the cow-house, which is around a spur of the height. It is ten by six, really large for the neighborhood, and the cow climbs the rock, when she has the chance, as easily as do the children.

As to the odds and ends whereof all this is built, you could not catalogue them.

There are bits of wood from the docks, from burnt-out city houses, from wrecks of other shanties; there are rusty strips of roofing-tin; sheets of painted canvas; the foundations are of broken bricks, neatly cemented, the top of it all is tin, slate, shingle, canvas and tarred paper. No bird's-nest ever testified to more industrious pickings and stealings.

They have been put together with a bird-like eye to effect, too. The gallery railings are painted a bright green, and enriched with iron scroll-work from some ruined villawall; the front porch is surmounted with a neat cornice, a well-tended vine clammers about the queer, rough corners, turkey-red

now. Neat as a new pin. Everything about her the same. Best class of shanty-dwellers, these. Five children; all clean; and money in bank. This is the kitchen—also dining-room. Good stove; dresser; bright pots and pans; white stone-china. Yankee clock on shelf. Oil-clothed table. Doors right and left. Through left we see white bed, and crib with patch-work quilt. Right, best room of house; horse-hair sofa, chromo, fancy clock, sewing-machine and—a sofa-bed. This is luxury! Who wouldn't live in a shanty?

They are not all so nice, though. Most of the Irish are shiftless, and some of the Germans are slovenly. Sometimes there



CORNER EIGHTY-SECOND STREET AND NINTH AVENUE.

curtains deck the irregular windows, and the stones and clam-shells that border the alley path shine with whitewash.

Come inside—we will make some pretext, for these people want neither to be stared at nor patronized. They are independent and respectable, and their sill is as sacred as the lordliest threshold in the land. But we will tell them that we want some goat's milk, which we do, and we will take rapid notes while the mistress of the house is telling us that she thinks we may find a widow with a goat three blocks up.

Mrs. Eichler. American woman. German husband. Has been good-looking. Is

is only one room in the shanty; but that is rare. Three is the average. Occasionally, one is occupied by two families; but the main idea of the community is the principle of an independent dwelling. Your squatter, smoking his evening pipe in front of his shanty, for which he has paid a fair ground-rent, is a King; and he knows it. His brother down in the Baxter-street tenement-house may despise him; but he cares not. He sends for his father and his mother from the old country, and the neat white heads sun themselves at his south windows all day long. He is proud of his old people, that fellow is; and they, being



SKETCHING UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

provided with potatoes to peel, or light employment of the sort, sit under his roof like aged benedictions upon their son's prosperity.

Of course, the shanty-dweller does not loaf for a living. He is a day laborer, a truckman, a junkman or a rag-picker. The last two lines of business are most numerous represented in Shantytown; but the better class of the population is found among the "truckers," or the men employed in the city as porters, messengers or drivers. They have been living in Shantytown, many of them, for twelve and fifteen years. A few have been on the ground even longer. The first comers were really *squatters*; later on, rent was charged and collected, and the rates have steadily risen of late years. The ground rent of a shanty ranges now from \$20 to \$100. These are "open leases," still, the dwellers are lessees of property, and citizens.

It may seem strange to consider this region as a factor in the body politic; but in this free country, votes are cheap, and Shantytown has a hand in the government of Fifth avenue. It comprises, indeed, the entire southern portion of the 19th Assembly District; and the shanty dwellers between Fifty-ninth and Eighty-sixth streets have nine election districts to themselves. The town proper lies in, or partly in, four. The nine election districts which cover the space between Sixtieth street (about), Eighty-

sixth street, Eighth avenue, and the North River last year polled a vote of 1,459 for Governor of the State, the majority being largely Democratic, divided between the regular and the split tickets. The vote of the four districts referred to as belonging principally to Shantytown proper was 684. The 20th district, of only six blocks, cast 149 votes. The political complexion of the whole region is decidedly Democratic. Last year there was a certain amount of discord in both parties; ex-Governor Lucius Robinson, at the head of the straight ticket of the



WATER-WORKS.

Democrats, diverted many votes not only from the ticket of Tammany Hall, the local organization most powerful in the neighborhood, but from the Republican ticket, which had lost the support of a small but active party of "Young Republicans," or "Scratchers," who worked in behalf of the regular Democratic nominee. On the vote for local officers, Shantytown "ran wid de machine" of Tammany. These figures are interesting only in that they show how large and how *masculine* is the population of the district—how rich in voters—that is, in men upward of twenty-one years of age, qualified residents. Of course, allowance must be made for "repeating," but the general testimony is that the region is too *solid*, too openly and surely pledged to the support of a certain party to call for any illicit electioneering devices. The significant fact remains, that four sparsely settled blocks on the edge of Shantytown turn out 204 votes; while the 16th election, of the Eleventh Assembly District, right in the center of the Murray Hill quarter,—the heart of the patrician domain,—the four blocks lying between Sixth and Madison avenues and Thirty-second and Thirty-fourth streets, can show only 240. Yet the aristocratic election district is closely built up: there are but four vacant lots in the whole space; and many of the houses are fashionable "boarding establishments," whose tenants are the same year in and year out. This little fact ought to preach a startling sermon on indifference in politics. The four Murray Hill blocks are the very stronghold of respectability. The extreme corners are occupied by two private houses of millionaire families, one grocery and one bazaar; both the shops being among the oldest, richest, and most respectable of their kind in New York. Yet even the mad excitement of such an election as last year's cannot bring from this district a decent and proper complement of voters; while every qualified man in Shantytown walks up to the polls and deposits his vote. Hence, Murray Hill is governed by the rulers chosen of its own truckmen, street-sweepers, and rag-pickers.

Few of Shantytown's voters are visible at this hour of the day. Later, toward evening, you may see a few junkmen sorting their collections; but in most of the yards, women are picking over the loads that their husbands and sons deposited last night. Women have to do a deal of work in this region. They have charge of almost all the shops, and many of the beer-saloons. We

will step into a shop, if you please—but not that one. It is a funny little place; but it is only the penny toy and candy store that is to be found wherever there are poor children. There is nothing characteristic about it save the varied assortment of queer confections in the tiny show-window; and the cheery, though unseasonable, plaster Santa Claus who presides over them, with fly-specked snow on his shoulders.

Here is a grocery that supplies Shantytown with tea and coffee, and other luxuries. You see the regulation assortment as you enter. It is Park and Tilford's, in little, with the addition of cabbages. The nicest little German woman imaginable is behind the counter. She speaks vile English with a sweet South German accent. We have forgotten our pipe and our 'baccy, and for eleven cents we get a pretty little terra-cotta affair and a small package of best Durham. "I can't sell no odder!" she declares, with a dainty shrug. Ambitious falsifier! Behind that counter you have hidden tobacco, at ten cents a pound, that would burn the aristocratic gums out of such customers as the present. But this we say not. We pause and chat, and thus learn that the ground-rent of this absurd box used to be fifty dollars, and is now eighty dollars; that the destruction of the shanties is affecting her business; that everybody in her neighborhood has had the proper bonus of five dollars to move away quietly; that it is all on account of the pride of the landlords, who want to have everything pretty for 1884 and the Great Fair; and that she thinks the shanties look better than the bare ground. We agree with her and depart.

We ought to inspect the beer-saloons, of which there are a plenty. But inspection involves beer, and, unless you have a strong stomach, the refreshment will be too much for you. However, this one is a sample of the majority of them—you see: plain, empty, with a high counter and one lonely keg of bad lager. The *Hausmutter*, who is quite seventy, serves us. A yellow-haired baby clings to her skirts. Her grandchild? "*Ach Gott, nein! Du bist mein papy, ni't wahr, August?*"

The "swell" saloon is at the corner of Eighth avenue and Seventy-second street. It is kept by an intelligent, bristly old German, with "exile of '48" written all over his socialist face. He has good *kümmel*—that's a sure sign, too. A mighty mastiff, chained up in one corner, growls at us suddenly and unsettles our nerves. "What do you

keep such an ugly beast for ? ” we ask, too hastily. “ He ought to be killed —— ”

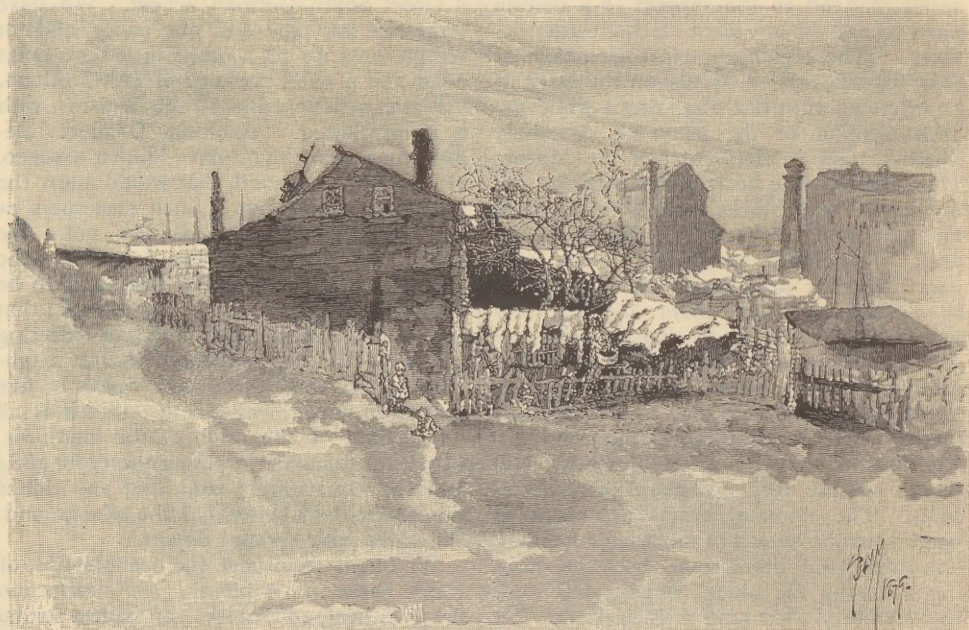
“ *KILL? kill dot dog?* ” And the stumpy figure rises up to positive grandeur as the old man thunders forth his wrath, like a disarmed Berserker. “ I guess you aint got no *friends*, to talk of killing a dog like dot ! ” And he fondles the animal that licks his hand.

This brings us well-nigh to the uppermost end of Shantytown. Let us turn down, now, and follow the rough line of Ninth avenue and the Boulevard. The Elevated Railroad cars crash over our heads every few minutes; their oily breath vitiates the air. This is much too cityfied. So, likewise, is that exquisitely neat little row of brown-stone houses;

goat, and a dollar for a cow, and are cordially hated for a mile around.

Shantytown's two churches stand on this side—the Chapel of the Church of the Transfiguration, where Dr. Houghton preaches every Sunday afternoon; and the Reverend Mr. Van Aiken's.

Here, too, are the shamefully neglected ruins of the little old Dutch Reformed Church, and its burying-ground, where lie in fragments the head-stones that, patched together by curious, and not wholly irreverent hands, show how outrageously some highly respectable people in this city are neglecting their ancestors. Shantytown's birds are better cared for.



NOT YET DOOMED.

all tenanted; the most notable encroachment yet upon the liberties of the town. Across the area railing of the corner house, a policeman is flirting with a pretty, red-haired chamber-maid. She tosses her cap when she sees us, and goes inside. We converse with the “cop”—not on the subject of his conquest. He gives the Shantytowners an excellent character. They are not troublesome, and yield few “drunks” to the acre.

A little below here is the Pound. It is perked up on a rocky corner, and is kept by an American couple, who despise their neighbors, impound the stray live-stock of said neighbors, get from the city a quarter for a

The poor always love birds. This love is often the sole grace and poetry of their lives. Old-time German folk treasured the rhymes of Walter von der Vogelweide. Norman peasants, in forgotten centuries, invented a quaint and touching story to tell their children why the robin's breast is red; and ages have only nurtured this affection till it has become a fixed fondness—a sort of gentle reverence even, which has made a constant alliance between the needy of this earth and the “careless children of the air.” The sky-line of Shantytown is dotted with bird-houses. The roofs are bestuck with them. They sit acock of the gables, and

atop of lonely poles. The tomato-can, vulgar, modern and artificial, but weather-worthy and snug, is no sooner nailed up under the eaves than it is tenanted by the business-like sparrow. The rare old wild-birds, that you never see, nowadays, in the city squares, share with the noisy English immigrants the larger domiciles, many of which are curiously ornate, testifying to the industrious leisure of some ingenious, bird-loving shanty-dweller. The airy colony does its courting, its mating, its setting and its nursing, and all the other duties of its life, in perfect quiet and content. The ragged infants below are less wanton than your sleek farmer's boys out in the country. They are willing to leave the birds alone, because the birds leave them alone. Their barbarian yearnings toward torture are glutted when they can tie an abandoned tin-kettle to an unprotected cat.

A goose is not a bird. "In spite of all the learned have said," common people of poetic instinct refuse to believe the libel on the feathered form of beauty to which we love to liken fluttering female hearts, and that sort of thing. Yet, let the graceless goose serve as a connecting link between the pets of Shantytown and its edible beasts and beasts of burden. To neither of these classes belongs the rat, who deserves one line of mention to record the fact of his presence. Nothing more does he demand. He is numerous, but commonplace—the same old rat who is everywhere that man and decay are. He is a shade more impudent here than is his wont, as who should



A TIMID OBSERVER.

say: "I'm a beggar and a tramp—you're right I am; but where's *your* social standing, anyway, stranger?" The pig is a step higher than the rat in the scale of animal worth, in that he can eat the rat. On the



THE LEADING BUSINESS.

other hand, he himself is eaten by man; and it were a nice question to discuss whether he himself regards a life as well and nobly spent that ends in "fresh country" sausages and the hasty ham-sandwich bolted at noonday by the down-town broker.

But 'twere reasoning too curiously to devote such speculation to the pig. The dog is the goat's only rival as the typical animal of the colony, and the dog must be properly discussed. The dog in Shantytown—let us stumble down this embankment, cross lots, and scramble up the opposite side, and thus get southward again to the more populous quarter, where we may search for illustrations of our theme. We will spare our feet, and take this narrow pathway between the two gray old hovels huddling together at one end of this long ravine. The dog in Shantytown—"Mother of Moses, sorr! did he bite ye? Jack, lave the gintleman alone, ye baste,—had he houl't of ye, sorr?" No, ma'am, he did not; but

he put his vicious old incisors through the thick stuff of this sleeve, and nothing but that yard of chain keeps those foaming jaws off us at this moment. The dog in Shantytown, as we were remarking, is everything that is vile, degraded and low in canine nature. In him survives the native savagery of the wolf, blent with an abnormal cunning learnt from association with men. He draws the rag-picker's little cart, not by way of making himself useful, not as the friend and helper of man, but simply to delude you into believing in his docility and sweetness of disposition. Then he bites you, and his owner grins out a string of ironic condolences. It is a thing arranged

gardener with a full half-acre of glass frames. But he is not happy then, for the warm weather keeps the prices down.

All over the rough land, dropping riverward to the west, we see, side by side with desolate old mansions, that were fashionable water-side villas in 1800, the outlying shanties, rebels in their way against the urban constraint of the town proper. They have broad fields to themselves, and are happy in a plenitude of wind and sun. Yet they are just as fond of creeping into out-of-the-way corners, and up inaccessible heights, as those in the crowded settlement.

We reach here another beer-saloon which you must not miss, though the beer is even



A TRUCKER'S SHANTY.

between the dog and his proprietor. Let us go hence, for the atmosphere is not sympathetic; and there are some beautiful effects of chiaroscuro just over there, about a quarter of a mile down the road.

And, as we pass on, we will glance at the little market-gardens to our right. Of these the larger occupy entire blocks—or rather the bottoms of blocks, yards below the street. They supply "salad stuff," radishes, and a few table vegetables to Washington Market. Their crops are grown with little regard to the season; and the soil is worked to its utmost capacity. In an open winter you will often find a prosperous market-

more utterly undrinkable than anywhere else. You climb up a shaky flight of steps, and you enter a woful little strip of a room—perhaps eight feet by fifteen. At one end are the bar and the German brigand who owns it; at the other several young local loafers are playing Russian bagatelle. They look on us with suspicion; but are not unwilling to play with us, and to win. Meanwhile, glance through the door at the back. You see a huge, empty room, dark except where the light creeps in around the edges of the shutters, and shows the faded pink and blue fly-paper on the ceiling; the plain benches against the walls, and the



A TOUCH OF REFINEMENT.

kerosene lamps in iron brackets screwed to the side-posts. This is Shantytown's ball-room ; where a fiddle or a banjo, or peradventure a cracked piano, leads some queer revelry in the winter-time.

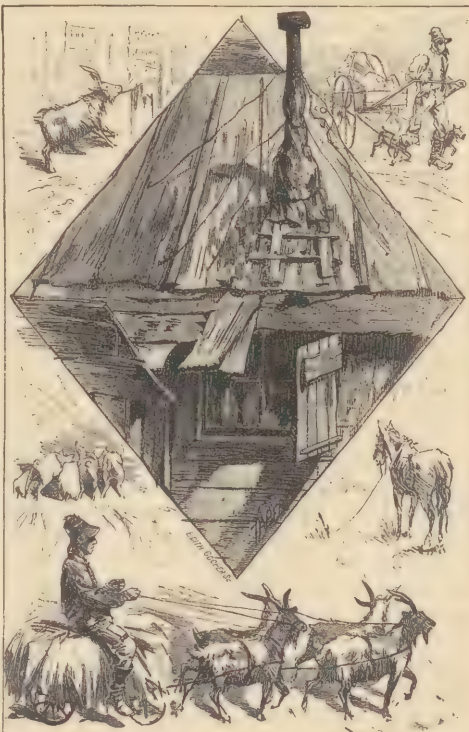
Let us not libel the population, though. It is only the worst of all who frequent these shady halls. From all accounts, the Shanty-folk are much inclined to stay at home o' nights. There are visiting from house to house for the old ones, and decent and sober love-making for the young.

Love! Is there love in Shantytown? Certainly, there is,—good looks, and strong likings, and healthy young blood, and all that goes to make up that rare folly. Those two babies, who are making their own personal, private and peculiar mud-pie on their own side of the gutter, far from the madding crowd of promiscuous infancy—that twelve-year-old pair carrying between them the family pail, just filled at the common pump—that broad-shouldered, red-faced young fellow, in his Sunday broadcloth, hanging on the wooden gate to flirt ponderously with the rosy tenant of the little yard—are not these all steps to that union of affection which has been so effectively commended of St. Paul?

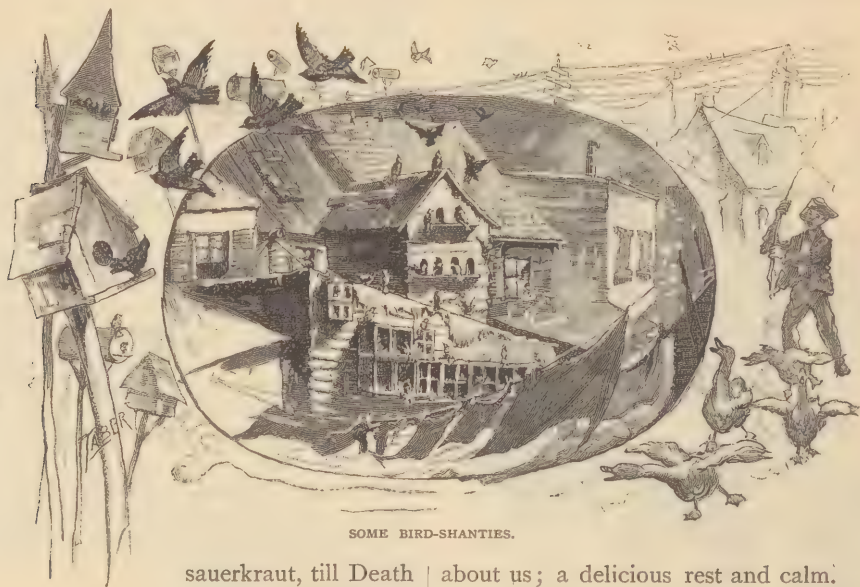
Or, to be more primitive, do not all these

lay fitting sacrifice on Cytherea's altar? Juliet Mulvany is spanked and put to bed for making mud-pies with Romeo Guggenheim. Romeo dies not for her; but, growing older, turns to a maiden of his own people, and visits her on Saturday nights, spending long hours in mute admiration of her blonde charms, broken only by spasmodic attempts at conversation, on wholly irrelevant subjects. The fire-light flickers, the rounded form moves to and fro, from shadow to brightness; going about the simple household duties; the tongue-tied young truckman yearns for smooth and impudent speech as wretchedly as a big-eyed Newfoundland dog; yet he speaks nothing, but looks instead, till broad hints and a clamorous clock tell him that he must turn his face homeward through the midnight dark. And then he goes out, with his dull heart full of strange, oppressive delight, and all the small boys round about, waiting in the blackness, throw tomato-cans at him, and chorus: "*Sho! Sho! Lottie Bierbaum's got a beau!*"

"Guggenheim—Bierbaum" will never figure in the marriage column of the "*Herald*"; but they will be quietly married all the same, and their lives will be all devotion and



ODD BITS HERE AND THERE.



SOME BIRD-SHANTIES.

sauerkraut, till Death dissolve the honest, homely partnership.

Now we have reached the Boulevard, and we will follow its well-planned course, leaving the Elevated Railway to roar and quiver down the avenue. The sun is setting. The wheels of homeward-bound bicycles whirl past us, breaking the yellow light into wiry flashes. Out of the shade of a ragged rock-corner comes a strange couple—strange for the place—a gentleman with a lady on his arm—young, well dressed; the man tall and handsome, the woman slight and pretty. A new-married pair, clearly. He is a young lawyer, perhaps, poor and persevering. He has just come up from business; she has been to meet him at the elevated road station; they are going home to some cheap lodging in one of the old high-gabled Knickerbocker houses, far up the road—or perhaps to a bit of a cottage still further up—their own little shanty.

But we must leave this smooth, broad road after awhile, and go down to Eighth avenue and Fifty-ninth street, where the house of the Paulist fathers stands—a big, brown building, with a granite extension, half-built, on the avenue. We wish to see the parish priest. Certainly. Father O'Gorman will see us in five minutes; it is dinner-time now. We are shown into a little, cell-like parlor, where the late sun-rays steal through the cool brown shutters, and against the white wall an ebony crucifix relieves the graceful, drooping lines of the ivory figure it upbears. Dead and perfect silence all

about us; a delicious rest and calm. Suddenly—hark! The rhythmic patter and shuffle of many feet, the sharp, strong, nervous vibration of men's high voices, chanting resonant Latin vocables; the beat of feet and the clear, trumpet-like tones draw nearer, still unseen, then echo down the corridors, growing fainter and sweeter; and, while our nerves yet thrill with startled pleasure, a black-robed figure bows before us, and the parish priest greets us with the easy, amiable courtesy which always sits so well on the educated Roman cleric. Father O'Gorman is very happy to afford us all the information in his power concerning his Shantytown flock. It is a good flock, quiet, well-behaved, attentive to its religious duties, and well-to-do in a worldly way. It can, the Father frankly says, "*afford* to be generous to *us*." No, there is but little vice or crime among the people of Shantytown. They are far superior, as a class, to any tenement-house people. The women have no time to idle; their household duties occupy them; the men find something to do at night in making the house neat, or cultivating the small kitchen-garden. The children go to Sunday-school with the Fathers. The Rev. Father Schwininger has an eye to the spiritual needs of the German part of the population. The "Sick Call" of the House shows negatively that the Shantytown folk are healthy. Father O'Gorman owns that he is losing a good congregation; is glad that many of the ejected have moved further up town, or to Hoboken, and regrets to hear that a few are going back to the

noisome tenements. Then a pale young priest calls the Father elsewhere, and he graciously bows us out.

On the steps of the "elevated" station, an employé answers a question about the region we have just left, by referring us to a fat and pompous old person, who is deferentially spoken of as a great man in the neighborhood, a builder, and an owner of many blocks. "Yes," this old person says, "they are cleaning out Shantytown—and a good job, too. Them people, for the rent they pay for what aint either a summer house nor a winter house, could get comfortable

rooms in a good tenement-house." Needless to ask what property that man builds and owns.

From the station platform we catch, through the trees, a last glimpse of Shantytown. The dark roofs rise high into the golden air; the smoke of wholesome dinners trembles hazily upward; a flash of sunlight against the sky tells of an else invisible bird-house. When we next come here, the houses will be gone, the fires will be cold, and the birds flown. Even now, the smoke-shrouded train rolls down the line, shuts out the picture, and bears us home.

MISS STOTFORD'S SPECIALTY.

AGATHA STOTFORD was unfortunate. She lived in the midst of an artistic and literary circle, without being herself either artistic or literary. Her father was a painter of eminence, her brother a poet, while her sister composed music which was supposed by the knowing to be not far removed from that of Wagner—Wagner being the music god of the particularly æsthetic circle in which Miss Stotford revolved. Moreover, all the women of her acquaintance were remarkable for something. One was distinguished for her subtle interpretation of music; another for her pictures; a third had tried her hand, not unsuccessfully, at sculpture; another still was noted for her conversation; and yet another for her novels; and perhaps the most successful of all for her great beauty.

So far, Agatha had been without a specialty. She was not a fool. She could tell a good picture from a bad one. Given a clue, she could discover beauties in a poem; but she had no scrap of original genius. Her father had spared no pains in teaching her to draw, but, after laborious efforts, the highest result was a pitiful little water-color sketch of a forlorn cow, drinking at a village duck-pond. She made her tilt at poetry, also, and addressed some lines to her canary, which began:

"Thou pretty warbler, singing all the day,
Thy song doth melt a cloud from off my breast;
It seems to drive each evil thought away,
And bringeth to my weary spirit rest."

But she stopped there, and accomplished no more in either of these directions, though no doubt she has preserved both poem and picture to this day as unappreciated achievements in art and literature.

She was certainly nice-looking, with a good, shapely figure, a fresh complexion, clear blue eyes, and bright, golden hair. But the men who frequented Mr. Stotford's studio wanted something more than prettiness to atone for the lack of intellectual power. Had she been as beautiful as her tall friend, Mrs. Liddell, the woman with the slightly hollow cheeks, and the wonderful eyes which seemed to have half-solved the mystery of death, they could have overlooked her want of other gifts. But as it was, she was treated more like a kitten than anything else, and against this Miss Stotford's spirit chafed and rebelled.

She finally formed a resolve to produce an effect of her own, or die in the attempt. After much thought, she determined to be "noble"—specially and distinctively "noble." She would do some "grand thing"—not, be it understood, for nobility's sake, but for the sheer longing to produce an effect. Some large, picturesque crime would probably have suited her quite as well; but since she had not the courage for vice, she resolved upon virtue—or, rather, I should say, upon nobility, for the small sweet trifles of self-sacrifice and devotion that belong to every day carry with them no special distinction.

Now, let it be known that, among the *habitués* of Mr. Stotford's studio, was George Singleton, a young hump-backed art-student, who worked terribly hard, so his most intimate friends said, to preserve the life about which he cared so little, since he felt, with a morbid bitterness, his physical deformity. Hitherto, Agatha had scarcely ever thought of wasting words upon him, but now there came to her a grand



SQUATTER LIFE IN NEW YORK.

THE metropolis abounds with contrasts of splendid intentions and miscarried achievements. Princeliness of space and brilliance of architecture are confronted by dilapidation and uncleanness, and even on Murray Hill, that pinnacle of all earthly ambition, disreputable little taverns and tenements exist in sight of the fashionable mansions with their carved balustrades and ample porticoes. But these contrasts, which have led one writer to describe New York as Paris with a touch of the backwoods, and another to say that the city is more like a savage, the resplendence of his trinkets, war-paint, and chromatic blanket only half covering his abundant dirt—these anomalies are nowhere so apparent as above the

southern borders of Central Park.

Reaching as far as Manhattanville on the west, and to Harlem on the east, the land has nearly all been graded, and many streets have been laid out, and in some instances paved, curbed, and illuminated. Ten years ago or more, when the imperial Tweed was seated with apparent firmness on the municipal throne, this region, with the splendid Park as a centre, was seized upon by real-estate speculators, and predictions were made that in a very few years it would be covered with handsome dwellings. But the tide of success turned another way, with what effect, as concerns Tweed and his ambitions, is well known; and though on the east side some of the vacant spaces have become populous, and some notable churches, hospitals, armories, and houses have been put up, the west side has altered so little that it has seemed to be lifeless. The new Museum of Natural History, with its imposing façade looking over the hill and dale of the Park, glances from its rear upon a neighborhood which, in my experience, is quite unique. It is not to be precisely described as city, nor as suburb, nor as the unsettled but broken territory that outlies most cities while wait-

ing to be absorbed in their advance. The anticipations that led to the grading and paving of the streets have had a very limited fruition in isolated rows of pretentious and rectangular "brown-stone fronts," which seem oddly out of place. Here and there a vestige of old times remains in a pre-metropolitan homestead, with an impoverished orchard around it,

contentions of pigs; and if you could shut out from the view the immature streets and the precursory dwellings, you would never realize that you are within the limits of the city, or that immense steamers are loading with grain by the river-side a quarter of a mile away, and that the buzzing which vibrates in the air comes from an elevated railway.



OLD AND NEW.

or in a grand mansion with a classic front of Doric columns, and a genesis far antedating Fifth Avenue. But it is not the new buildings, premonitory of the city's advance, nor the old ones reflecting the past, nor these two in contrast, that give the region its characteristics and peculiar interest. All down in the hollows between the graded streets, and in spaces where, no streets having been opened, the gray Laurentian rock stands with but a superficial layer of soil upon it, thousands of acres are under cultivation by squatters, and without other inclosure to the land than the embankments formed around the hollows by the trap-rock foundations of the streets. Agriculture is carried on with a primitive simplicity of life and under a picturesqueness of condition that set an artist on the edge of desire. Many square miles are green with vegetables. You see the gardeners with their wives and mothers bending to their work; you hear the querulous call of geese and the

The holdings are of various proportions, sometimes being limited to an irregular strip, and sometimes embracing three or four blocks in possession of one man. It is not an occasional load, the product of one patch, that goes to Washington Market, but a large proportion of all the green stuff consumed in the city is grown in these hollows—the lettuce, the parsley, the celery, the cabbages, and the potatoes. But though one man trebles the quantity his neighbor produces, he is no better off nor more ambitious in the matter of architecture than the poorest; and in the corners, or in the centre of the hollows, or perched high up on the wintry gneiss, is found a grotesque variety of makeshift dwellings, mere concessions to exigencies in many cases, which by no means indicate the pecuniary resources of the occupants. Some of them are simply squalid, but upon others the sunshine and the rain have brought out a soft color, and the scraps of which they are built have



ON THE BORDER OF CENTRAL PARK.

borrowed a quaint grace from the weathering. It is scarcely safe to let an artist loose among them. They abound with picturesque "bits," which he declares it next to impossible to exhaust; and not long ago, when I soared into the skyward region where C—— has his studio, I found him black to the wrists with ink, with which he was printing etchings of some things that he had discovered among these shanties.

The people are self-contained, and indisposed to encourage an intimacy with strangers, or to heed them while they keep beyond the limits of the gardens. A great many are Germans, with an imperfect command of English. I met a policeman strolling at an easy pace through one of the unfilled avenues, and, strange to say, he demonstrated no fierce hostility when a person of modest aspect approached and spoke to him. The echoes of the barn-yard had quieted the eruptive wrath

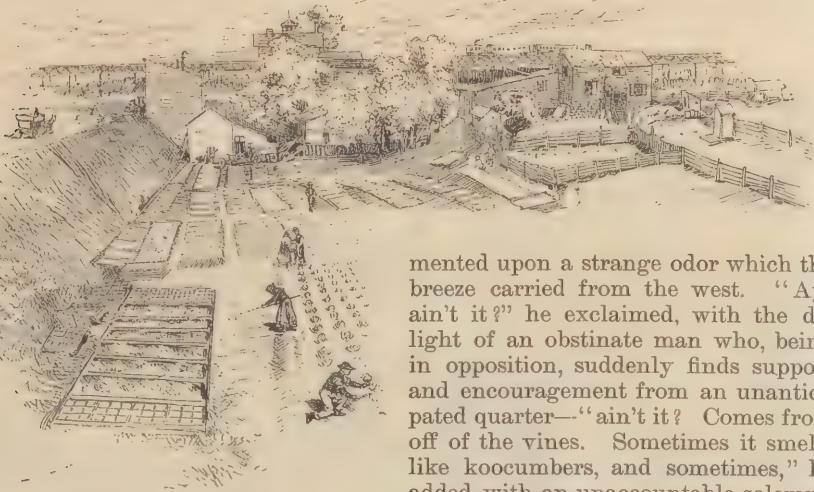
within him; cabbage and parsley, the open and breezy acres of vegetation, had become a febrifuge to all that was implacable and belligerent in this Hibernian constable, and perhaps some of the softening influence had come from the indistinct reproduction which he saw of his native Kerry in the low-lying cottages and the lazy wreaths of smoke. Could not this mild-mannered Cerberus introduce us into one of these houses in the hollow? and in making the proposition we did not lose sight of the open palm. Not he, said this most unusual of policemen: they did not like intrusions, and he did not wish to be familiar with them. They gave him very little trouble, except on Saturday nights and holidays, which they often celebrated with more or less bloody disputes on the question of boundary, and—not without a longing glance at the open palm—he did not like to bother them.

They are, indeed, austere reticent, and

provokingly evaded our efforts to lead them into a friendly conversation. The men hoeing the turnips and banking the celery, to whom we spoke, met our greetings with churlish and suspicious brevity, refused to answer our comments on their gardens, and were impregnable even to our enticing and propitiatory insinuations as to the weather.

"Good-morning," we said, with our best grace, to a rugged old fellow who was working with a hoe before the superior

other squatter whom we spoke to farther on. We smiled and greeted him. He nodded, but met all our questions with a resolute silence. Neither queries as to cabbages nor assertions as to boundary privileges could unlock his speech. But as we were retiring, discomfited, we com-



GARDEN IN A HOLLOW.

sort of cottage, with the vine about its front, that stands between Seventy-ninth and Eightieth streets on Ninth Avenue. "You've a pretty bit of land," we continued, with extreme diffidence, as, recovering from his stooping position, he lifted toward us a face with as many seams as the hide of a veteran alligator.

"Board of Health?" he merely said, interrogatively, indicating his inference that we might be attached to that serviceable body.

"No," we answered, somewhat cheerlessly.

"Estate agent?" he next asked.

And again we had to give him a negative, with a growing conviction that we had struck barren soil.

"Ugh!" he said, fixing his eyes upon a potato as if it were the only thing worth consideration in this world, and not another word would he utter, though we plied him with many questions.

Our success was little better with an-

mented upon a strange odor which the breeze carried from the west. "Ay, ain't it?" he exclaimed, with the delight of an obstinate man who, being in opposition, suddenly finds support and encouragement from an unanticipated quarter—"ain't it? Comes from off of the vines. Sometimes it smells like koo cucumbers, and sometimes," he added, with an unaccountable solemnity, "like melons."

Now whether or not he, of all his family, was the only one who detected the odor, and proclaimed its existence against their united contradictions, which from the zeal of his concurrence seemed likely, it is impossible to say, but we had struck an apparently congenial topic, and trusted that it would lead on to something else. He did tell us that he paid twenty-five dollars a year ground-rent for each lot, and that some of his neighbors paid as much as fifty dollars a lot; that he sold all his produce at Washington Market, and had no dealing with street hucksters; but his communicativeness was factitious, and though no doubt grateful for our confirmation of his perceptions, he very soon relapsed into his previous unapproachableness.

Perhaps the reader, wondering at the silence that met us, will think that we must have fallen among fools, but the taciturnity concealed uncommon shrewdness, thrift, and cunning.

Whoever would explore this queer neighborhood must not only be prepared

for rebuffs if he seeks information, but, so vicious are the innumerable dogs, he must also remember Achilles, and armor both heels, if say nothing of providing himself, if feasible, with extra calves. Some dogs we know in good society measure a stranger by the quality of his coat, and with them to be well dressed oft supercedes the rest, but these scavengers—our respect for dog nature, even when it is partially depraved, is such that we hesitate to use the opprobrious word—are envious *communards*, and become frantic at the sight of decent clothing. An explo-

the rough clapboards to a soft gray or slate-color. It is evident that the uncertainty of the squatter's tenure has been recognized at the time of building, and no idea of permanence has guided the selection of material, or the manner in which the heterogeneous odds and ends have been put together. Inequalities of the surface have not been smoothed or removed, but the structures have been accommodated to them; and one end of the floor is often several feet below the other, with perhaps a knob of the Laurentian gneiss protruding in the middle. Old and



PLANTING.

ration is fully worth while, however, and though you wander without any definite plan, and without any severe concentration of the attention, you can not fail to be interested and amused at the unfamiliar sights and sounds of the neighborhood.

Sometimes the little shanties have been treated to a coat of whitewash, which makes them glare in the sunshine, and brings out all their angularity and "fragmentariness"; but generally they have been left to the weather, which has toned

battered stove-pipes have been utilized as chimneys, a few abandoned lengths of an old drain have been used for the same purpose in another case, and beyond the timber in the walls few of the materials of construction are original. If, when a young man falls in love with a squatter's daughter, and marries her, it is incumbent upon him to build a home for her, an excursion among the junk-shops will enable him to secure all the hardware necessary for this dove-cote, and most of the other



GOING TO MARKET.

materials may be picked up in the wanderings of any clear-sighted *chiffonier*. We saw a good-natured-looking fellow sprawling over the shingles of his roof, and patching it with a very dilapidated carpet; and as the afternoon was sunny, and no winter snows could be dreamed of from the violet sky, he did the work easily, and puffed at his pipe as he hammered in the nails.

But time and the weather have been helped in giving picturesqueness to the nondescript little houses by the vines planted around the walls, and a few flowers. The beauty of a flower would seem to be a constant stimulus to cleanliness, a silent appeal for order and improvement. It has no practical effect here, however; and the squatters are deplorably careless in their habits, eating and sleeping with no more decency than the goats, pigs, geese, and dogs that take "pot-luck" with them. Once we saw a pretty girl standing in a doorway, and the interior behind her was dirty and dark enough. But she wore a fine merino dress of claret-color, with gilt necklace and pink Hessian boots. Her hair was smoothly braided, and it was quite evident that she was being brought up with a design of her parents to make

some sort of a lady of her. No doubt those were her parents whom we saw working in the garden—a rough and sour old man, with a brown and wrinkled helpmate; and there is this to the credit of these ignorant people, which shows how far-reaching and penetrating the influence of American philoprogenitiveness is, that though barbarian themselves, they desire their children to have the benefits of education, and clothe them with a fond generosity. We met a procession of children coming home from a German-American School, which is kept over a disreputable little grog-shop at Sixty-seventh Street and the Boulevard, and though their homes were in the hollows, they were as blithe and as prosperous in appearance as any children who could be found coming out of a public school. But the boys are monsters, with shrill voices and aggressive manners. It was with immense satisfaction that we saw a gang of them dispersed and stoned by a furious old man whom they had been tormenting, and who, in admonishing them, projected a missile between every word, like a hyphen, with unfailing accuracy.

But, as the amiable constable said, there



AN INTERIOR.

is little strife in the neighborhood; and saving the greetings of the dogs, you may wander all day long without hearing a sound to distress the nerves. There will be many predatory goats in your path, and the flocks of geese are everywhere, flapping their wings with a make-believe air in wholly impracticable puddles. Mingling with the voices of these, you may hear a ploughman speaking to his horse as he turns from furrow to furrow, and you seem to be far away from the noise of the city. Early in the morning the wagons come home from market, whither they go between three and four o'clock. There are lights glimmering in the hollows soon after midnight, and the teams are on the move long before dawn. Many people in the immediate neighborhood are supplied with their vegetables direct from the gardens, and among the sights that you may see is a fair-sized wagon drawn by two mastiffs, which, so far from finding the harness irksome, trot along with a load of green stuff, wagging their tails and barking, as if the work was the veriest pleantry in the world. If you stand in the hollow at the corner of Eighty-sixth Street and Eighth Avenue, you will see a long reach of garden, with a weathered old cottage near the middle, and if you do not raise

your eyes, it will seem to you that you are in Ireland. But the actual locality is recalled to you by the elevated trains buzzing to and fro on Ninth Avenue; and through the thread-like trestle-work you can see, still farther away, an abandoned mansion, with an aristocratic cupola blinking in the sunshine. When the shadows fall, the land has a sear and brown look, and the hollows remind one of Ireland more than ever. But later in the afternoon the crimson splendor in the west is reflected upon the old shanties perched above the level, and their frail and weather-beaten shingles glow with the transmitted warmth.

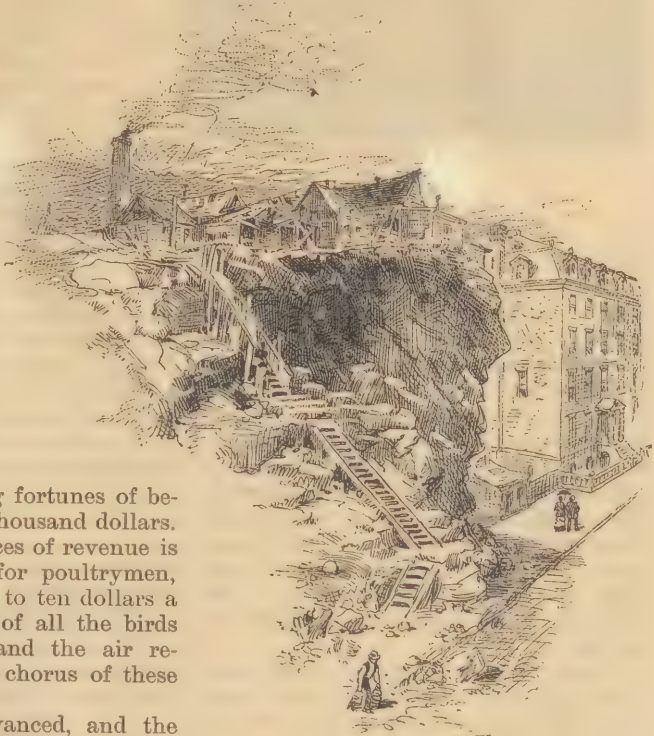
The natural conformation of the land has been preserved here and there, and the squatters have been kept away. A pretty corner has been protected at Seventieth Street and Eleventh Avenue, with an old homestead on the hill behind it, and several willows of enormous girth and extraordinary beauty bend over the soft grassy slope. Where some new streets have cleaved it, cross-sections of the former Croton Aqueduct are revealed, with immense foundations, and in one part of the tunnel we discovered some adventurous boys, who were evidently enacting a day-dream of a smugglers' cave. At Sixty-eighth Street and the Boulevard we toiled

up a hill, and, behold! here was an old grave-yard, with the inscriptions nearly all obliterated from the stones, and the rank grass growing over them. On the edge of an upright tablet an old woman was sitting, milking a goat, and some children were playing around a fire near the middle. At one side was the house of a squatter, with a vegetable patch before it, and not far away across the spacious Boulevard were handsome modern villas, with ornamental gates and beds of flowers. These contrasts are not exceptional; they characterize the whole neighborhood; and the old and the new, the evanescent and the permanent, that which has been achieved and that which awaits completion, are seen side by side.

Below Seventieth Street the shanties are poorer and denser, and the garden spaces are smaller. From time to time a nest of them is demolished by the police, and the occupants are turned out by force and bloodshed. In a little while all will have disappeared; but in the mean time whoever is interested in social studies may find them here. Not all of the inhabitants are gardeners. Some are laborers, hucksters, and rag-pickers, and many of them are rich, having fortunes of between one and sixteen thousand dollars. Among their other sources of revenue is the fattening of geese for poultrymen, who pay them from five to ten dollars a month for taking care of all the birds their yards will hold, and the air resounds with the tireless chorus of these feathered boarders.

The afternoon is advanced, and the squatters are lighting their lamps in the

shanties. A door is open, and we peep in. The furniture is scant, and much the worse for wear. A child is curled up before the rusty little stove, and a mummy-like old woman is talking Celtic between the puffs of her pipe to a barefooted girl who is kneading bread. Two minutes later we are crossing the greensward of Central Park, where the branches stand out in black lines against a saffron sky; and as we reach the end of the Mall, a great cluster of spires and the white marble mass of the Cathedral loom up in the south. Which is the dream—this fair prospect of a city, or the anachronistic interior that we have just left? Neither, dear reader. Both are realities; and what we have seen is paradoxical New York.



CLIFF DWELLINGS.

MOTHERHOOD.

I gave my maiden-love tender and shy,
And yet I was sad. Why? O why?

I gave my wife-love pure and true,
And yet—and yet I was longing too!

God gave me mother-love, warm and strong,
And my sadness was lost in my lullaby song.



TRUANTS FROM SCHOOL.

ITALIAN LIFE IN NEW YORK.

THE fact that Italian immigration is constantly on the increase in New York makes it expedient to consider both the condition and status of these future citizens of the republic. The higher walks of American life, in art, science, commerce, literature, and society, have, as is well known, long included many talented and charming Italians; but an article under the above title must necessarily deal with the subject in its lower and more recent aspect. During the year 1879 seven thousand and two hundred Italian immigrants were landed at this port, one-third of which number remained in the city, and there are now over twenty thousand Italians scattered among the population of New York. The more recently arrived herd together in colonies, such as those in Baxter and Mott streets, in Eleventh Street, in Yorkville, and in Hoboken. Many of the most important industries of the city are in the hands of Italians as employers and employed, such as the manufacture of macaroni, of objects of art, confectionery, artificial flowers; and Italian workmen may be found everywhere mingled with those of other nationalities. It is no uncommon thing to see at noon some swarthy Italian, engaged on a building in process of erection, resting and dining from his tin kettle, while his brown-skinned wife sits by his side, brave in her gold earrings and beads, with a red flower in her hair, all of which at home were kept for feast days. But here in America increased wages make every day a feast day in the matter of food and raiment;

and why, indeed, should not the architectural principle of beauty supplementing necessity be applied even to the daily round of hod-carrying? Teresa from the Ligurian mountains is certainly a more picturesque object than Bridget from Cork, and quite as worthy of incorporation in our new civilization. She is a better wife and mother, and under equal circumstances far outstrips the latter in that improvement of her condition evoked by the activity of the New World. Her children attend the public schools, and develop very early an amount of energy and initiative which, added to the quick intuition of Italian blood, makes them valuable factors in the population. That the Italians are an idle and thriftless people is a superstition which time will remove from the American mind. A little kindly guidance and teaching can mould them into almost any form. But capital is the first necessity of the individual. Is it to be wondered at, therefore, that the poor untried souls that wander from their village or mountain homes, with no advice but that of the parish priest, no knowledge of the country to which they are going but the vague though dazzling remembrance that somebody's uncle or brother once went to Buenos Ayres and returned with a fortune, no pecuniary resource but that which results from the sale of their little farms or the wife's heritage of gold beads, and no intellectual capital but the primitive methods of farming handed down by their ancestors, should drift into listless and hopeless poverty? Their emigration is frequently in the hands of shrewd compatriots, who manage to land

them on our shores in a robbed and plundered condition.

On the other hand, the thrifty *bourgeois* who brings with him the knowledge of a trade, and some little capital to aid him in getting a footing, very soon begins to prosper, and lay by money with which to return and dazzle the eyes of his poorer neighbors, demoralizing his native town by filling its inhabitants with yearnings toward the El Dorado of "Nuova York." Such a man, confectioner, hairdresser, or grocer, purchases a villa, sets

hand struggle for bread of an overcrowded city. Hence the papers of the peninsula teem with protests and warnings from the pens of intelligent Italians in America against the thoughtless abandonment of home and country on the uncertain prospect of success across the ocean.

The fruit trade is in the hands of Italians in all its branches, from the Broadway shop with its inclined plane of glowing color, to the stand at a street corner. Among the last the well-to-do fruit-merchant has a substantial wooden booth,



A STREET-LIFE SCENE.

up his carriage, and to all appearance purposes spending his life in elegant leisure; but the greed of money-getting which he has brought back from the New World surges restlessly within him, and he breaks up his establishment, and returns to New York to live behind his shop in some damp, unwholesome den, that he may add a few more dollars to his store, and too often his avarice is rewarded by the contraction of a disease which presently gives his hard-earned American dollars into the hands of his relatives in Italy. There is an element of chance in the success of Italians which makes emigration with them a matter of more risk than with other nationalities of more prudence and foresight. The idyllic life of an Italian hill-side or of a dreaming mediæval town is but poor preparation for the hand-to-

which he locks up in dull times, removing his stock. In winter he also roasts chestnuts and pea-nuts, and in summer dispenses slices of water-melon and *aqua cedrata* to the *gamins* of the New York thoroughfares, just as he once did to the small *lazzaroni* of Naples or the fisher-boys of Venice. With the poorer members of the guild the little table which holds the stock in trade is the family hearth-stone, about which the children play all day, the women gossip over their lace pillows, and the men lounge in the lazy, happy ways of the peninsula. At night the flaring lamps make the dusky faces and the masses of fruit glow in a way that adds much to the picturesqueness of our streets. These fruit-merchants are from all parts of Italy, and always converse cheerfully with any one who

can speak their language, with the exception of an occasional sulky youth who declines to tell where he came from, thereby inviting the suspicion that he has fled to escape the conscription. That they suffer much during our long cold winters is not to be doubted, but the patience of their characters and the deprivations to which they have always been accustomed make them philosophic and stolid. As soon as they begin to prosper, the fatalism of poverty gives place to the elastic independence of success, and their faces soon lose their characteristic mournfulness. I have seen young Italian peasants walking about the city, evidently just landed, and clad in their Sunday best—Giovanni in his broad hat, dark blue jacket, and leggings, and Lisa with her massive braids and gay shawl, open-eyed and wide-mouthed in the face of the wonderful civilization they are to belong to in the future. The elevated railroad especially seems to offer them much food for speculation—a kind of type of the headlong recklessness of Nuova York, so unlike the sleepy old ways of the market-town which has hitherto bounded their vision.

There are two Italian newspapers in New York—*L' Eco d' Italia* and *Il Repubblicano*. There are also three societies for mutual assistance—the “Fratellanza Italiana,” the “Ticinese,” and the “Bersaglieri.” When a member of the Fratellanza dies, his wife receives a hundred dollars; when a wife dies, the husband receives fifty dollars; and a physician is provided for sick members of the society. It gives a ball every winter and a picnic in summer, which are made the occasion of patriotic demonstrations that serve to keep alive the love of Italy in the hearts of her expatriated children. Many of the heroes of '48 are to be found leading quiet, humble lives in New York. Many a one who was with Garibaldi and the Thousand in Sicily, or entered freed Venice with Victor Emanuel, now earns bread for wife and child in modest by-ways of life here in the great city. Now and then one of the king's soldiers, after serving all through the wars, drops down in his shop or work-room, and is buried by his former comrades, awaiting their turn to rejoin King Galantuomo.

There is something pathetically noble in this quiet heroism of work-day life after the glory and action of the past. I met the other day in a flower factory,

stamping patterns for artificial flowers, an old Carbonaro who had left his country twenty-two years before—one of the old conspirators against the Austrians who followed in the footsteps of Silvio Pellico and the Ruffinis. He was gray-haired and gray-bearded, but his eyes flashed with the fire of youth when we talked of Italy, and grew humid and bright when he told me of his constant longing for his country, and his feeling that he should never see it again. It was a suggestive picture, this fine old Italian head, framed by the scarlet and yellow of the flowers about him, while the sunlight and the brilliant American air streamed over it from the open window, and two young Italians, dark-eyed and stalwart, paused in their work and came near to listen. It was the Italy of Europe twenty years back brought face to face with the Italy of America to-day. In another room, pretty, low-browed Italian girls were at work making leaves—girls from Genoa, Pavia, and other cities of the north, who replied shyly when addressed in their native tongue. Italians are especially fitted for this department of industry; indeed, their quick instinct for beauty shows itself in every form of delicate handiwork.

In the second generation many Italians easily pass for Americans, and prefer to do so, since a most unjust and unwarranted prejudice against Italians exists in many quarters, and interferes with their success in their trades and callings. It is much to be regretted that the sins of a few turbulent and quarrelsome Neapolitans and Calabrians should be visited upon the heads of their quiet, gentle, and hard-working compatriots. All Italians are proud and high-spirited, but yield easily to kindness, and are only defiant and revengeful when ill-treated.

There are two Italian Protestant churches in the city, various Sunday-schools, mission and industrial schools, into which the Italian element enters largely, established and carried on by Protestant Americans, chiefly under the auspices of the Children's Aid Society. The most noteworthy of these, as being attended exclusively by Italians, adults and children, is the one in Leonard Street.

Some four hundred boys and girls are under instruction in the afternoon and night schools, most of them being engaged in home or industrial occupations during



AN ITALIAN FÊTE DAY IN NEW YORK.

the day. The building is large and airy, containing school-rooms, bath-rooms, a reading-room, and printing-offices, where work is furnished to Italians at the usual wages, and those seeking instruction are taught. There is a class of twenty-



THE DUET.

four girls who are taught plain sewing and ornamental needle-work, including lace-making. I visited this class, and found a number of little girls employed with lace cushions, and the manufacture of simple artificial flowers. With these last they were allowed to trim the new straw hats that had just been given them. They were plump, cleanly little creatures, much better off in the matter of food and raiment than their contemporaries of the peninsula. The lace class has been in existence but a short time, and the specimens are still somewhat coarse and irregular, but there is no reason why it should not become as important a branch of industry among the Italian women of America as among those of Europe. The only wonder is that instruction in a calling which exists by inheritance in Italy should be needed here, as these girls are mostly from the villages of Liguria, of which Genoa is the sea-port, and might fairly be supposed to know something of the craft which has made Rapallo and Santa Margherita famous. Shirts for outside orders are also made in the school, and the girls receive the same wages for their labor as are offered by the shops. The attendants upon the school are mostly Ligurians, and repudiate indig-

nantly all kinship with the Neapolitans or Calabrians, whom they refuse to recognize as Italians, thereby showing how little the sectional sentiment of Italy has been affected by the union of its parts under one ruler.

Under the guidance of a lady connected with the school, I explored Baxter and contiguous streets, nominally in search of dilatory pupils. Here and there a small girl would be discovered sitting on the curb-stone or in a doorway, playing jackstones, with her hair in tight crimps, preparatory to participation in some church ceremony. An Italian feminine creature of whatever age, or in whatever clime, stakes her hopes of heaven on the dressing of her hair. Her excuse for remaining away from school was that she had to "mind the stand," or tend the baby, while her mother was occupied elsewhere, and her countenance fell when she was reminded that she could have brought the baby to school. It was noticeable that all these children, who had left Italy early or were born here, had clear red and white complexions, the result of the American climate. We passed through courts and alleys where swarthy Neapolitans were carting bales of rags, and up dark stairs where women and children were sorting

them. Some of their homes were low, dark rooms, neglected and squalid; others were clean and picturesque, with bright patchwork counterpanes on the beds, rows of gay plates on shelves against the walls, mantels and shelves fringed with colored paper, red and blue prints of the saints against the white plaster, and a big nose-gay of lilacs on the dresser among the earthen pots. Dogs and children were

ing his way from one watering-place to another, accompanied perhaps by his family, or at least a child or two. In answer to an inquiry concerning monkeys, we were directed to a large double house opposite, said to be inhabited entirely by Neapolitans, who were swarming about the windows in all their brown shapeliness. In the hallway, above the rickety outer stairs, lounged several men with



THE MONKEYS' TRAINING-SCHOOL.

tumbling together on the thresholds just as they do in the cool corridors of Italian towns. On the first floor of one of the houses I found an establishment for the repairing of hand-organs, where a youth was hammering at the barrel of one, and a swarthy black-bearded man, to whom it belonged, was lounging on a bench near by. Against the smoke-blackened wall an armful of lilacs stood in a corner, filling the room with sweetness, and leading naturally to the thought that with the spring and the flowers the organ-grinder prepares for a trip into the country, play-

red shirts and unkempt heads and faces. One of them was the proprietor of the monkey establishment, and his *farouche* manner disappeared with our first words of interest in his pets. He led us into the little room adjoining, where some six or eight half-grown monkeys were peering through the bars of their cages, evidently pleading to be let out. The most creditably schooled monkey was released first, handed his cap, made to doff and don it, and shake hands, orders being issued both in Italian and English. Some of the others—small brown things with bright

eyes, and "not yet quite trained," said the Neapolitan—were allowed a moment's respite from captivity, at which they screamed with joy, and made for the dish of soaked bread, dipping their paws into it with great greediness, while the *padrone* laughed indulgently. A properly trained organ-monkey is worth from twenty to thirty dollars.

In the great house known to Baxter Street as the "Bee-hive," we found the handsome *padrona* whose husband rents organs and sells clocks, which latter articles appear to be essentials to Italian housekeeping, in default of the many bells of the old country. The *padrona* was at first by no means eager to give information, as she supposed, in good broad American (she was born in New York), that it "would be put in the papers, like it was before." It would appear that the advantages of communication with the outer world are not appreciated by the inhabitants of Baxter Street. The *padrona* finally informed me that the rent of an organ was four dollars a month, and that they had hard work getting it out of the people who hired them, "for they always told you they had been sick, or times were bad, or their children had been sick; and when the Italians came over they expected you to give them a room with a carpet and a clock, else they said you had no kindness." I saw in the cluster of eight houses that form the "Bee-hive" various humble homes, from the neat and graceful poverty adorned with bright colors, and sweet with the bunch of lilacs brought from the morning's marketing (the favorite flower of the neighborhood), to the dens of one room, in which three or four families live, and take boarders and lodgers into the bargain. They told me that the building contained a thousand souls, and that cases of malarial fever were frequent. It is true that the odors of Baxter Street are unhealthy and unpleasant, arguing defective drainage; but those of Venice are equally so, and exist for the prince no less than the beggar. As for overcrowding, no one who, for example, has spent a summer in Genoa, and has seen the stream of pallid, languid humanity pour out of the tall old houses of the Carignano district, can find food for sensationalism in the manner of life common to Baxter Street. It must be remembered that the standard of prosperity in America is not that of Italy, and

that a man is not necessarily destitute nor a pauper because he prefers organ-grinding or rag-picking to shoemaking or hod-carrying, and likes macaroni cooked in oil better than bakers' bread and tough meat.

I fail to find that Italians here retain their national habits of enjoyment or their love of feast-day finery. True, I have seen *contadine* in gold beads and ear-rings sitting on their door-steps on Sunday afternoons, and I have watched a large family making merry over a handful of boiled corn, just as they did at home, and I have seen the Genoese matrons dress one another's hair of a Sunday morning in the old fashion. But the indifferentism and stolidity of the country react upon them. There seems to be little of the open-air cooking, the polenta and fish stalls, the soup and macaroni booths, that breed conviviality in the Italian streets. They apparently eat in their own homes, after the New World fashion.

Undoubtedly much of the recklessness with which Italians are charged in New York is the result of the sudden removal of religious influences from their lives. At home there is a church always open and at hand, and the bells constantly remind them of the near resting-place for soul and body. When their homes are noisy and uncomfortable, they can find peace and quiet in the cool dark churches; and when they are on the verge of quarrel or crime, and the hand involuntarily seeks the knife, the twilight angelus or the evening bell for the dead softens the angry heart and silences the quick tongue. Here the only escape from the crowded rooms is in the equally crowded yard, or the door-step, or the rum-shop. The only entirely Italian Catholic church in New York, I believe, is that of San Antonio di Padova, in Sullivan Street, attended by a superior class of Italians, all apparently prosperous and at peace with their surroundings.

In the days of political persecution and struggle in Italy, America was the republican ideal and Utopia toward which the longing eyes of all agitators and revolutionists turned. When self-banished or exiled by government, they were apt to seek their fortunes in America, often concealing their identity and possible rank, and taking their places among the workers of the republic. Among these was Garibaldi, who passed some time here in the suburbs of New York, earning his

living like many another honest toiler, and awaiting the right moment to strike the death-blow at tyranny. To study the Italian character in its finer *nuances*, the analyst should not limit his investigations to the broad generalizations of the Italian quarters, but should prosecute his researches in out-of-the-way down-town thoroughfares, where isolated shops with Italian names over their doors stimulate curiosity. In these dingy places, among dusty crimping-pins, pomatum-pots, and ghastly heads of human hair, half-worn clothing, the refuse of pawnbrokers' shops, you may meet characters that would not have been unworthy the attention of Balzac, and would eagerly have been numbered by Champfleury among his "Excéntriques." I have one in my mind whose short round person, tall dilapidated hat, profuse jewelry, red face, keen gray eyes, and ready tongue fully qualify him for the title of the Figaro of Canal Street.

Another interesting class of Italians is found in the people attached to the opera—the chorus-singers and ballet-dancers, engaged also for spectacular dramas. It is in a measure a migratory population, crossing the ocean in the season, and recrossing when the demand for its labor ceases. Many chorus-singers who remain in New York follow different trades out of the opera season, and sing sometimes in the theatres when incidental music is required. By singers New York is regarded chiefly as a market in which they can dispose of their talents to greater pecuniary advantage than in Europe, and they endure the peculiar contingencies of American life simply in order to lay

by capital with which to enjoy life in Italy. A season in America is always looked forward to as the means of accumulating a fortune, and not for any artistic value. I have heard of more than one Italian who, after a successful engagement in New York, has invited sundry compatriots to a supper at Moretti's, and announced his intention of shaking the dust of America from his shoes for evermore, being satisfied to retire on his gains, or to sing only for love of art and the applause of artists in the dingy opera-houses of Italy. The climate of America with its sudden changes kills the Italian bodies, and the moral atmosphere chills their souls—notably among artists. The "Caffè Moretti" has for years been the *foyer* of operatic artists, and no review of Italian life in New York would be complete without a mention of it. For many years they



OLD HOUSES IN THE ITALIAN QUARTER.

have dined, and supped, and drank their native wines in this dingy, smoke-blackened place, forgetting for the nonce that they were in America, and, coming away, have left their portraits behind them,

pite from homesickness over Signor Moretti's *Lachryma Christi* and macaroni cooked in the good Milanese fashion. In view of the general assimilation of Italians with their American surroundings, it is surprising and delightful to find a place that retains so picturesque and Italian a flavor.

Since the abolishment of the *padrone* system one sees few child-musicians, and the wandering minstrels are chiefly half-grown boys and young men, who pass their summers playing on steamboats and at watering-places.



OLD CLOTHES DEALERS.

large and small, fresh and new, or old and smoke-dried, hanging side by side on the wall to cheer the hearts of the brother artists who should follow after them to the New World, and find a moment's res-

It is gratifying to feel that one of the disgraces of modern and enlightened Italy has been wiped from the national record by the strong hand of governmental authority.